

5 CLAIMS

1. A self-protecting wavefarm comprising:
a number of wave energy converters, each converter comprising at
least one float and being operable to move the or each float thereof
10 between a first, electricity-generating, position at which the float is
immersed in sea waves for driving mechanical to electrical energy
conversion by the converter and a second, protected position at which the
movement of the float by sea waves is reduced or eliminated; and
a control arrangement for effecting coordinated sequential operation
15 of the converters to move their respective float or floats between their
first and second positions in case of inclement sea conditions, the control
arrangement being operative such that while the float or floats of at least
one converter remain in the electricity generating position, the electrical
energy generated by at least one such converter is used to power the other
20 converter or converters to move their float or floats to their second
positions, and thereafter, for at least one converter, for which no further
converter would remain in a generating condition to supply the necessary
power, the power to move its float or floats to their second position is
supplied by an alternate source of energy.

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2. A wavefarm according to claim 1 wherein the first and second positions of the float are at different elevations.

5 3. A wavefarm according to claim 1 or 2 wherein the alternate energy source is a store of energy previously converted from mechanical to electrical energy by the converters.

10 4. A wavefarm according to claim 1 or 2 wherein the alternate energy source is an electrical generator.

5. A wavefarm according to claim 1, wherein control apparatus is used, in
15 response to inclement conditions, for directing the energy generated by one or more converters still operative in the sea to power the extraction or submersion of the other converters.

6 A wavefarm according to claims 1 or 2, in which the mechanical to
20 electrical energy converters comprise linear generators and which in normal use convert the mechanical energy provided by the floats to electrical energy, but which, in the event of inclement conditions, are used instead as linear motors to either extract into protective cavities, or to submerge the point absorbers, to an extent sufficient to avoid damage thereto.

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